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trail riding worldwide

Wild Coast Horse Trail

Weight limit: 95kg / 14,9 stone

Nearest airport: East London

8 days / 7 nights / 6 full days of riding

Explore the rugged, unspoilt, natural beauty of the Wild Coast of South Africa. A malaria-free area, the Wild Coast offers an unparalleled riding experience over rocky headlands, through the rolling hills of the former homeland of the Transkei and along vast tracts of empty golden beaches. This is not called the most spectacular beach riding in the world for nothing – the riding is quite simply, fantastic.



The Riding

This trail is suitable for strong intermediate and experienced riders only. Good riding fitness is required as you'll be covering up to 30-40km and spending 6-8 hours in the saddle each day. There can be long and fast canters and gallops along the beaches and riding over challenging terrain.

Hard hats are mandatory.

Guides and Group sizes

Your guides are relaxed, professional and have many years of experience in guiding these trails. They'll make sure every rider is very well looked after.

Maximum number of riders in a group is 8.



Horses and Tack

The horses are of different breeds, including part Arabs, Anglo Arabs, Arab-Percheron crosses, Thoroughbreds and South African Boerperds. They live out in a natural herd all year round, are barefoot and schooled English style. Out on the trail they are ridden with long, relaxed reins in walk and in a light seat at canter. All horses are hand-picked for their good temperament and they are trained to be extremely fit, responsive and forward going.

The saddles are especially designed for trail riding, distributing the weight equally on the horses back. They are very comfortable for the rider and the high pommel and cantle make you automatically sit up straight. Each horse has its individually fitted saddle. Small, splash-proof saddlebags are provided for items such as water bottles, sun cream and cameras.

Accommodation and Dining

Accommodation along the way will be in informal coastal resort hotels. There is a full laundry service at all the hotels. This is payable separately. Luggage will be transferred by car between the overnight stops.

Breakfast is buffet style with a selection of continental and full English options. Lunch varies depending on the day and is either a saddlebag picnic, set meal or pub lunch. Dinner is usually a set menu of 3 or 4 courses depending on the hotel.

Special diets and allergies can be catered for with advance notice.



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival & Introductory ride

On arrival at East London airport, you will be transferred to Kei Mouth Guest Lodge. After lunch change into your riding clothes and get taken up to the beach paddock. The afternoon is a short introductory ride around the local area. Blow away those travelling cobwebs and get to know your horse for the week. A relaxed, friendly evening meal awaits you back at the guesthouse along with a good night's sleep. Overnight at Kei Mouth Guest Lodge.

Day 2: Kei Mouth – Trennerys/Seagulls Hotel

Your adventure starts now! After breakfast it's back up to the paddocks. A short ride down to the Kei River and then a crossing by ferry. Ride over rocky headlands and long stretches of beach. The guides will take you to hidden waterfalls for a picnic lunch and a swim if you choose! Then it's to Trennerys or Seagulls Hotel (both quaint, authentic hotels that give guests a real taste of traditional South African holidaying). Stretch your legs on the beach or unwind with a beer by the pool before enjoying a great dinner with your riding group. Overnight at Trennerys or Seagulls Hotel

Day 3: Trennerys/Seagulls Hotel – Mazeppa Bay

Awake to the sound of the sea and the solitude of being somewhere on the edge of Africa. It's time to move on with a distance of 40km to be covered. Continue up the coast, traversing rolling hills and sandy beaches and pass through rural settlements. Cross a number of inland river drifts, then the ride veers back to the sea for a breakfast or lunchtime picnic on the beach. Tides permitting, the rest of the day is a breath-taking ride on long, endless beaches, which mean faster riding and the thrill of a good horse in a great location. Your next stop is Mazeppa Bay. Relax by strolling on the secluded beach or cross a suspension bridge onto one of the only islands along the coast. Overnight at Mazeppa Bay Hotel.

Day 4: Mazeppa Bay – Kob Inn

The next leg of your adventure is "The Gorge". This route takes you through a beautiful river ravine and over some tricky terrain. Once through the rocky riverbed, the ride heads back to the sea through valleys and along winding cattle tracks, reaching your next destination – Kob Inn. Arrive just in time for lunch. In the afternoon you have the opportunity to relax and soak up the laidback hospitality of another coastal treasure. With a pub on the rocks overlooking the wild seas and sheltered private beaches on either side, this is an exquisite location in which to kick back and truly embrace 'Africa time'. Overnight at Kob Inn Hotel

Day 5: Kob Inn – Kob Inn

Today you should be fresh and ready for a full day in the saddle. The tides dictate the day's schedule which will take you about 20kms up the coast along sheltered beaches, into hidden coves and beautiful lagoons. Your guide will select a suitable spot for you to enjoy a picnic and a swim in a lagoon before heading back to Kob Inn for an evening of delicious dining and maybe a few cocktails! Overnight at Kob Inn Hotel.

Day 6: Kob Inn - Wavecrest

It's time to head back down the coast again. Once more, the timing of the day's riding will be dependent on the tides as you cross rivers, climb hills and speed along beaches on your way to Wavecrest Hotel. After a good 30km ride, you can choose to indulge in a little pampering during the afternoon at the Wavecrest spa; maybe explore the rare mangrove forests by either boat or canoe. More South African coastal hospitality awaits you as you relax and allow yourself to be spoilt by the Wavecrest team. Overnight at Wavecrest Hotel

Day 7: Wavecrest – Kei Mouth

From Wavecrest, if the tide is right, the ride back to Kei Mouth will be fast-paced and along the beach. After dropping your horse off at the beach base for a well-earned rest, you will

have a late lunch at the country club. Alternatively, after an inland start, stop for lunch en-route and hit the beaches at low tide for some fast canters in the afternoon before arriving back in Kei Mouth. You will be treated to a typical South African Braai; finishing off a week of unforgettable riding with the warm hospitality that the Wild Coast is known for. Overnight at Kei Mouth Guest Lodge.

Day 8: Departure

Depending on your departure time, you could squeeze in one more ride before the shuttle picks you up to transfer you back to the airport.



The price includes

- 6 full days of riding
- Short introductory ride upon arrival
- Short ride on departure day
- Trail riding horse, tack and saddlebags
- Shared accommodation
- Breakfasts
- Lunches
- Evening meals
- All arrangements for duration of holiday
- Services of guides

Not included

- Flights
- Airport transfers
- Drinks
- Other activities or spa treatments
- Tips



Flights and Airport transfers

Do not book flights until you have received the Booking confirmation email from saddletravel.com.

Plan your flights to East London as follows:

Arrive by 12pm (midday) on Day 1 of your holiday.

On the day of departure riders will be collected at 9am for flights at 12pm, or 2pm collection for flights at 5pm.

Guests will be collected from East London airport as they land and transferred to Kei Mouth. All transfers are paid cash directly to the shuttle driver in South African Rand. We will handle all transfer arrangements for you.



What to bring

We recommend wearing your riding boots when travelling and carrying one set of riding clothing and your riding hat in your hand luggage, so should your luggage not make it to the destination you'll still be able to ride.

- Comfortable jodhpurs or riding pants
- Riding / walking boots with good grip.
- Chaps
- Your own well-fitted hard hat
- Shorts for walking and hiking
- Flip flops or sandals.
- A couple of light long sleeved shirts with collars to protect you from the sun while riding.
- Light long trousers
- Something comfortable to wear to dinner in the evenings.
- Warm clothing 1 x jersey (jumper/fleece) to ride in and a nice one for the evenings!
- A good warm rain proof coat.
- A lightweight raincoat / wind breaker that can be tied to your saddle
- Sun block. Factor 50 is recommended! Also a lip balm with SPF is a good idea.
- Sunglasses
- Swimming costume and light weight towel for swimming
- Bumbag
- A torch
- Camera and binoculars
- Waterproof pouch for phone / camera
- South African plug adaptor
- Book / eBook
- Insect repellent & bite cream
- Personal medication
- **NB!** A valid credit card to cover any unforeseen emergency. This would be used to cover the unlikely event of a medical emergency. The doctors and hospitals in the area demand a deposit to be paid up front. You would be able to reclaim this amount from your travel insurance.

Climate

Wild Coast has a fairly warm and temperate climate all year round with seasons opposite to the UK seasons. The summer season from end of November to end of February is the warmest time when the average high temperature during the day is approx. 24°C with the occasional hotter day. Night-time temperatures stay at 17°C. Throughout the year the daytime temperatures stay close to 20°C even during the coolest months in the winter, however, from May to October the night-time temperatures can drop to 10°C. Rains can occur all year round but tend to be more likely during the warmer months from October to April.

Health

For health and vaccine recommendations, please consult your healthcare provider at least 8 weeks before your trip.

Wild Coast is a Malaria-free area but if you plan to travel to other parts of South Africa before or after your riding holiday, we recommend checking with your healthcare provider for the need of anti-malarial medication.

To avoid tick bites use repellent and long-sleeved shirts and trousers. If you get flu-like symptoms on your return home do ask your health care provider to exclude the possibility of tick bite fever, which can be treated with antibiotics.

Country specific information can also be found at National Travel Health Network and Centre website: <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>



Travel documents

For entry requirements to South Africa for UK citizens, please visit the Foreign Travel Advice website: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/south-africa/entry-requirements>

For any other nationalities, please contact your local embassy to check entry requirements.

Having the correct travel documents is entirely your responsibility.

Currency and tipping

The local currency in South Africa is the South African Rand (ZAR). We recommend bringing enough cash to cover the cost of your airport transfers, drinks at the hotels and optional spa treatments. All hotels also accept Mastercard and Visa.

It is customary to tip in South Africa. We recommend giving your guides a tip for guiding and looking after you during your riding holiday.



Riding declaration

"I am an experienced rider and able to mount & dismount unaided. I have a firm seat and I'm confident and in control at all paces over rough terrain (including rising trot, light seat canters and gallops) and have a good level of current riding fitness. I do not suffer from any illness or disability that could prejudice my safety or that of others."

Booking conditions

Holidays can be considered confirmed once 20% non-refundable deposit has been paid and you have received a confirmation email from saddletravel.com. Please don't book any flights before receiving an email with instructions to do so.

You are booking with the riding holiday operator, these are their booking conditions:

Booking form

Booking forms are regarded as properly signed.

Insurance

Riding horses, and outdoor activities always represents an amount of risk. Therefore, for your own benefit and ours we have made participation in our adventures, trails & safaris subject to you taking out a suitable travel insurance covering you for medical expenses, injury, evacuation and liability for the entire duration of your trip. When booking you confirm that such insurance will be in place. Please make sure that no exclusion clauses limit protection for the type of activities included in your holiday.

Please note: In the unlikely event of you having to go to hospital during your stay with us, the local private hospitals may have delays in accepting overseas medical insurance. You will be required to pay a deposit within 24 hours or be transferred to a government facility. **Please ensure that you travel with a valid credit card** – this is the most effective way of paying for your treatment, and it is easy for your family/insurance to transfer money to cover your medical treatment. It also gives your insurance company time to contact the hospital and guarantee payments etc.

Liability

Whilst riding or in the vicinity of horses in the care of the operator or guide of your trip you must comply with the instructions of that person. You accept that the aforementioned operator or guide is entitled to require you to dismount or to refuse to allow you to ride if for any reason they consider that you may endanger the safety or welfare of any person or horses. If so required you have no claim and will not be entitled to any compensation or refund.

You understand and accept that you will be required to sign our standard "liability waiver" on arrival.

Domicile executandi

All possible disputes arising from our terms and conditions are subject to South African Law and any hearing of cases will take place in a South African Court of Law.

BOOKING NOTES

- Prices quoted **exclude** flights to and from South Africa & internal flight to East London (SA) as well as transfers to Kei Mouth.
- There is an ATM machines at the local shop to draw cash (master/visa card). You will generally only need money for curios, drinks at the bar and gratuities and a day trips including a Big 5 game drive.
- Unless otherwise stated road transfers from the airport to and from the Wild Coast resorts are charge separately.
- Unless otherwise stated includes all meals, accommodation, horse riding and equipment, the service of an experienced guide, and a back-up vehicle to transfer your luggage from point to point.
- Drinks and alcoholic beverages are to be paid separately; we do however provide water bottles for the saddle bags.
- Our clients on overnight trails do not lift a finger; unless of course they choose to and they are welcome to help out with the horses.
- The riding is paced according to the rider's abilities. Generally walking along cattle paths and cliff tops, long trots and canters on sandy tracks, with fast canters and an occasional gallop along the beaches.
- We generally ride 2 to 3 hours in the morning and again 1 ½ to 2 hours in the afternoon, depending on the weather, sea tides and what the riders can manage. Sometimes it is a little shorter, and sometimes a little longer.
- We normally have 2 to 8 riders per trail which may include riders who are with us on our work rider program.
- All confirmed bookings with deposits received will be honoured at the quoted rate.
- Wild Coast Horse Trails reserves the right to increase or decrease the prices previously quoted for holiday arrangements before a booking is confirmed. External factors beyond our control may affect the holiday costs such as accommodation tariff increases, taxes (e.g. VAT), exchange rate fluctuations etc.
- We will endeavour to keep to the ride itinerary as stated, but factors beyond our control (especially the weather & sea tides!) could mean that we have to make alternative accommodation arrangements or change the ride plan on any given day. Whatever happens, you our client will still get a great riding holiday!

SAFETY REGULATIONS

- All persons, when mounted must wear protective head gear.
- We recommend that you bring your own protective riding hats; we have a selection available if you do not have one.
- We also recommend that riders wear long riding boots or short boots with half chaps to prevent chaffing on the legs.
- In the interest of general safety, the guide's decision in any given situation is final as the well-being of the horses and riders is paramount.

Cancellation policy

Payment & Cancellation Terms

saddletravel.com

Holidays are confirmed with 20% non-refundable deposit.

The full balance is due 56 days before start date.

If you cancel your booking less than 56 days before the start date of your trail we are entitled to receive full payment, less refunds as follows:

42 days or more before booking date - 50%

31 days or more - 30%

less than 31 days - nil

Travel insurance

All saddletravel.com customers are required to take out appropriate travel insurance that covers horse riding and holiday cancellation. Proof of insurance details will be required during booking process.



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